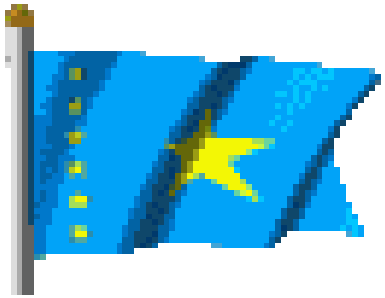
TRAVELER'S BRIEFING



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

(Republique Democratique du

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BACKGROUND

Full Name: Democratic Republic of the

Capital: Kinshasa

Population: 50,481,305 (est)

Type of government: Dictatorship

Head of government: Pres Laurent Kabi

Official language(s) French, Lingala, Ki

Economy: State-controlled

Religions: Catholic (50%), Protestant (20%), Kimbanguist (10%), Islam (10%)

TRAVEL

Travel restrictions: Do not travel in rural areas unless escorted by local authorities. Foreigners are forbidden from traveling in the regions of Kasai Oriental and Kasai

International Airport: Kinshasa

Flights from Frankfurt: None

Other methods of arrival: Ship/Road/Rail

U.S. Embassy address: 310 Avenue Des Aviateurs, Kinshasa Tel: 243-88-43608 FAX: 243-88-41256

Transportation: Public transportation: Poor.

Urban Roads/Maintenance: Poor.

Rural roads/Maintenance: Poor.

Availability of roadside assistance: Poor. Intercity roads are poor and often impassable in the rainy season. Visitors who wish to travel anywhere outside of Kinshasa must obtain advance, written permission from the Ministry of Interior,

ENTRY/EXIT

Travel Necessities: Travel on leave status is prohibited. Travelers who wish to travel to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DROC) with visas and/or entry/exit stamps from Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda or Zimbabwe may experience difficulties at he DROC airport or other ports of entry. Passports, visas, and immunization records are required for all travelers, For official travel, no-fee passports are required. US citizens are strongly encouraged to register at the Amembassy in Kinshasa upon their arrival and to obtain updated information on travel and security. Passport and visa required. Visas should be obtained from an embassy of the

Customs, immigration, and quarantine inspection is required. Immunization records are required when arriving and departing and are checked while passenger passes thru customs. Only immunization records are checked if remaining on airport

Duty-free entry for personal effects:cameras (l still and l video), jewelry, portable typewriter, cigarette lighter, electric razor, and tobacco up to 1/2 pound or l00 cigarettes, or 50

HELPFUL HINTS

Special restrictions: The cost of living is high in The Democratic Republic of the Congo. Restaurants specializing in European cuisine are available but expensive. Changes or cancellations of reservations require a 24-hour advance notice. Western-style hotels cost approximately $180 US per day. Many local tribal restrictions; do not criticize people or government. It is illegal to handcarry personal weapons into country. Weapons shipped as part of hold baggage must be registered with local government officials. The Department of State warns U.S. citizens against travel to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DROC) due to security and political uncertainties. U.S. citizens, English-speaking individuals of other nationalities and travelers who appear to be members of military or missionary groups have been specifically targeted

Amembassy hours of operation are 0730-1630 local. The Amembassy observes US and local holidays.

forms of harassment.

MONEY

Currency restrictions: Do not show dollars or other foreign exchange except at legal exchange agency. Amembassy has a cashier, and Citibank has an office near Amembassy. US dollars are accepted everywhere and are the currency of choice. Currency rules are in a state of flux in the Democratic Republic of the Congo's complex, mostly-cash economy. Banks rarely accept US currency in poor condition, in denominations larger than $100 or the old-style $100 bill and $50 bills issued in 1980 and earlier. Credit cards are accepted only at a few major hotels, restaurants, and car rental firms (American Express is most likely to be accepted). Credit cards may not be used at banks to obtain cash advances. Only commercial banks cash travelers checks.

Rate: Approximate: 2.5 Congolese francs for $1.

HEALTH

Major threats: diarrhea, respiratory diseases, accidents, malaria, arthropod-borne diseases, schistosomiasis, STDs, high elevation sickness, , heat injuries and industrial

Availability of medical services: Poor. Medical facilities are extremely limited. Medicine is in short supply.

Medical Insurance: May not apply in DROC. Check with your policy advisor to see if you are covered or will be reimbursed.

Status of hospitals: Poor.

Health Precautions: Typhoid vaccination recommended. Yellow fever vaccination required of all travelers over one year of age. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is considered a cholera and yellow fever-infected area.

Immunizations: Hep A (recommended), Hep B, MMR, typhoid, influenza, yellow fever, meningococcal vaccine, anti-malarial

FORCE PROTECTION

Country Clearance is needed for high-ranking officers traveling to DROC. You obtain this by going through your S3/G3 section. This must be done at least 30 days ahead of

Briefings: AT/FP level I brief from command's Level II trainer

Antimalaria drugs and insect repellents should be used. Chloroquine-resistant malaria is present in much of the country. Avoid uncooked vegetables, unpeeled fruits, and untreated salads. Meats should be well-cooked. Drink bottled or treated water. Avoid fresh milk and milk products; cheese and eggs are acceptable if properly stored. Extremist groups continue to make threats of violence against U.S. citizens and interests in the Great Lakes region. While operating out of northeastern DROC in March 1999, a rebel group specifically targeted and killed U.S. citizens and other English-speaking people in southwestern Uganda.Unofficial armed groups operate in parts of the country and are responsible for pillaging, vehicle thefts, carjackings, extrajudicial settling of differences, ethnic tensions and continued military

FORCE PROTECTION

The security situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains unstable. Order throughout the country has not yet been established, especially in the eastern or Great Lakes region. Security forces are an amalgam of units, including reintegrated troops from the former regime. Their chain of command is often unclear; troops are often ill-trained, ill-paid, and, sometimes, poorly disciplined. The change in regime in 1997 resulted in the stationing of large numbers of security forces in all urban areas, notably the capital, Kinshasa, where a curfew is in effect. Exact hours of curfew vary; please check locally. Entry by car or boat after 6 p.m. is prohibited. Travel in the downtown parts of Kinshasa and Lubumbashi is generally safe. Civil disturbances may occur without warning in all urban areas and have the potential to turn violent. Rally and demonstration sites should be avoided. There are numerous military roadblocks, especially after dark. Vehicles are often searched for weapons, and travelers checked for identity papers. Troops sometimes seek bribes and transportation. If confronted with such a

CRIME

Criminal Activities: Low levels of economic prosperity continue to promote crime, vehicle thefts, burglaries, armed robbery and carjackings throughout the country.

The loss or theft abroad of an U.S. passport should be reported immediately to local police and to the nearest U.S.

Embassy or consulate. When driving in cities, keep windows up and doors locked. At roadblocks or checkpoints, documents should be shown through closed windows. In the event of a traffic incident involving bodily injury to a third party or pedestrian, do not stop to offer assistance under any circumstances. Proceed directly to the nearest police station or gendarmerie to report the incident and request official government intervention. Attempting to provide assistance may further aggravate the incident, resulting in a hostile mob reaction or stoning.

DROC is strict on: U.S. presence and firearms.

WEATHER

http://cnn.com/WEATHER/html

Http://www.weatherunderground.com/

Christian Vioujard/Liaison Agency

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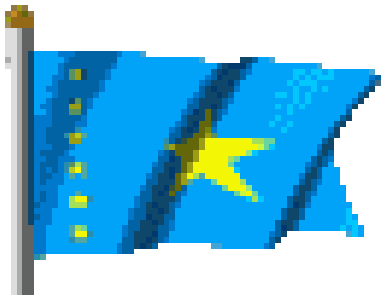
CLOTHING

Uniform restrictions:. Uniforms must be worn for official visits on US military aircraft. Due to the hot, wet, and humid weather, lightweight summer clothes are recommended. Outside main cities, sun glasses and headgear, tough cotton twill shirts and trousers, medium or long wool stockings, high shoes or lace boots, and insect repellents and nets are needed.

This concludes the TRAVELER'S BRIEFING for



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